Guru-Devatātmā

Accepting Śrī Guru as One's Life and Soul

Lectures by:

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

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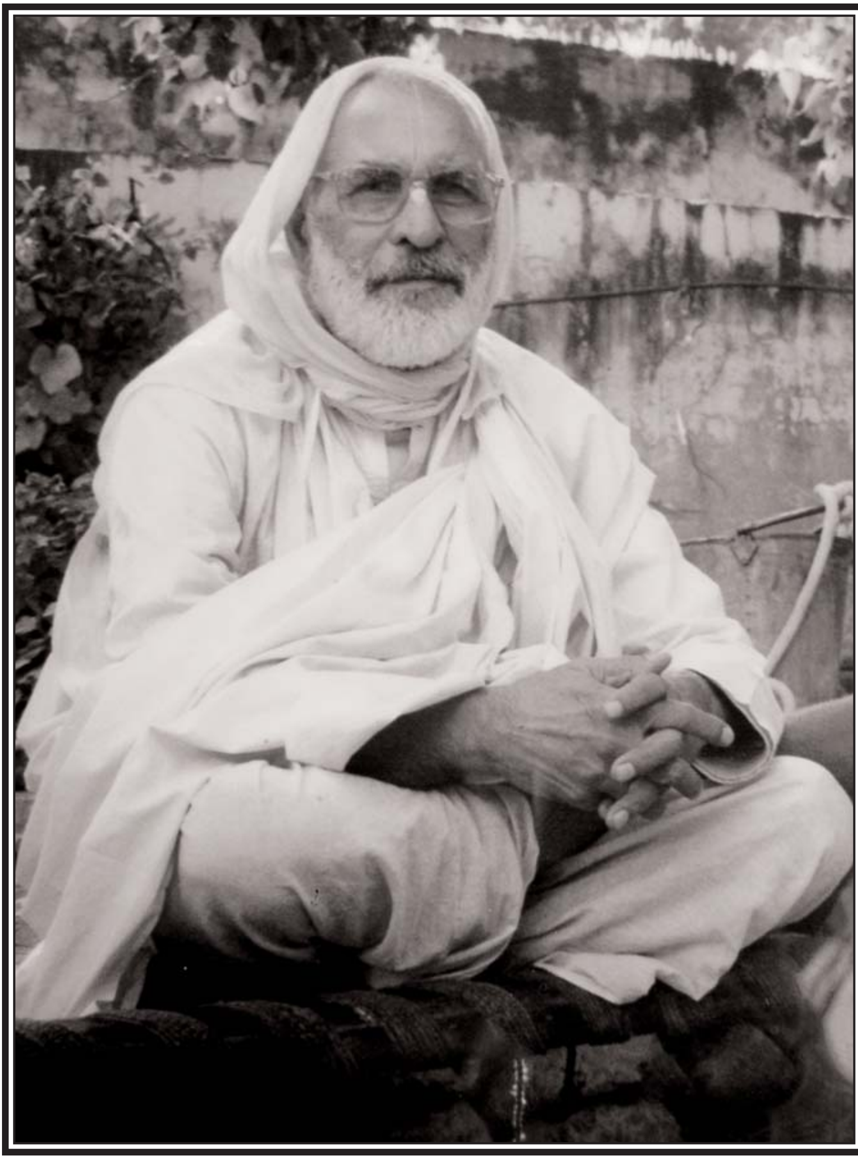
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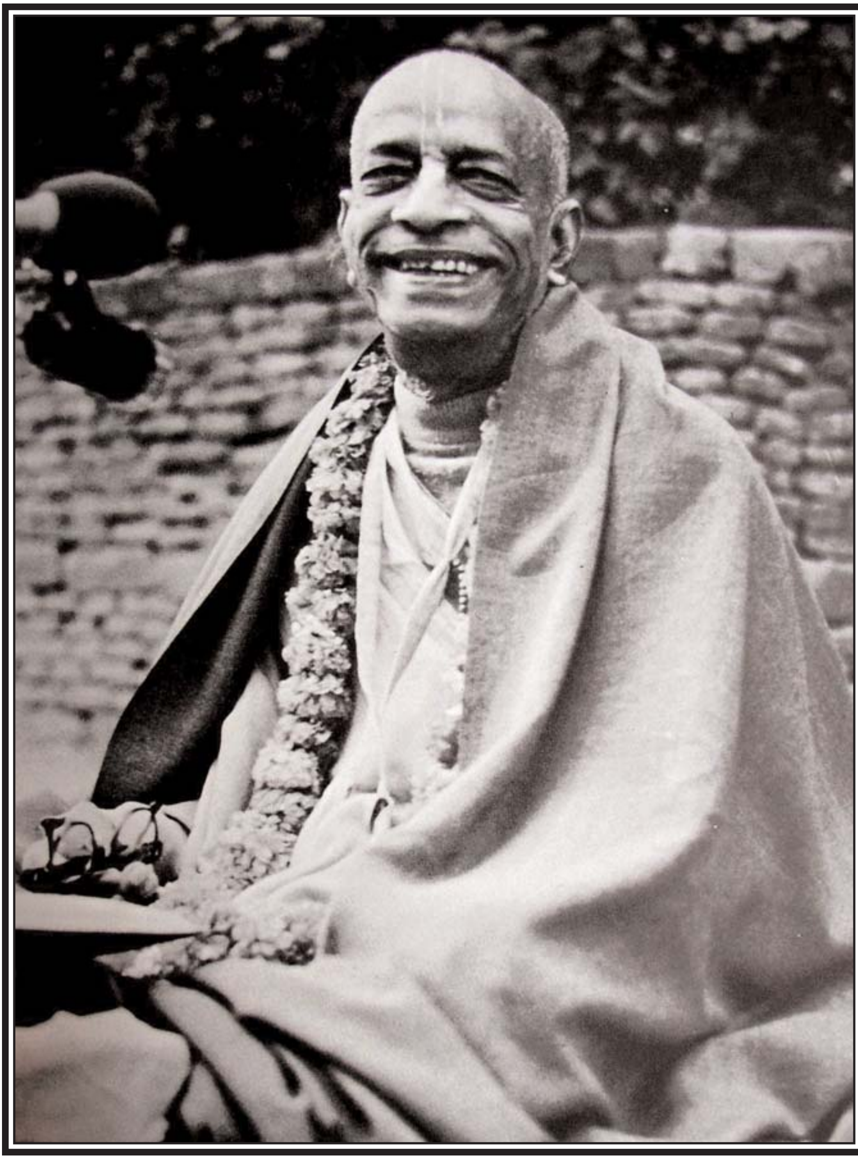
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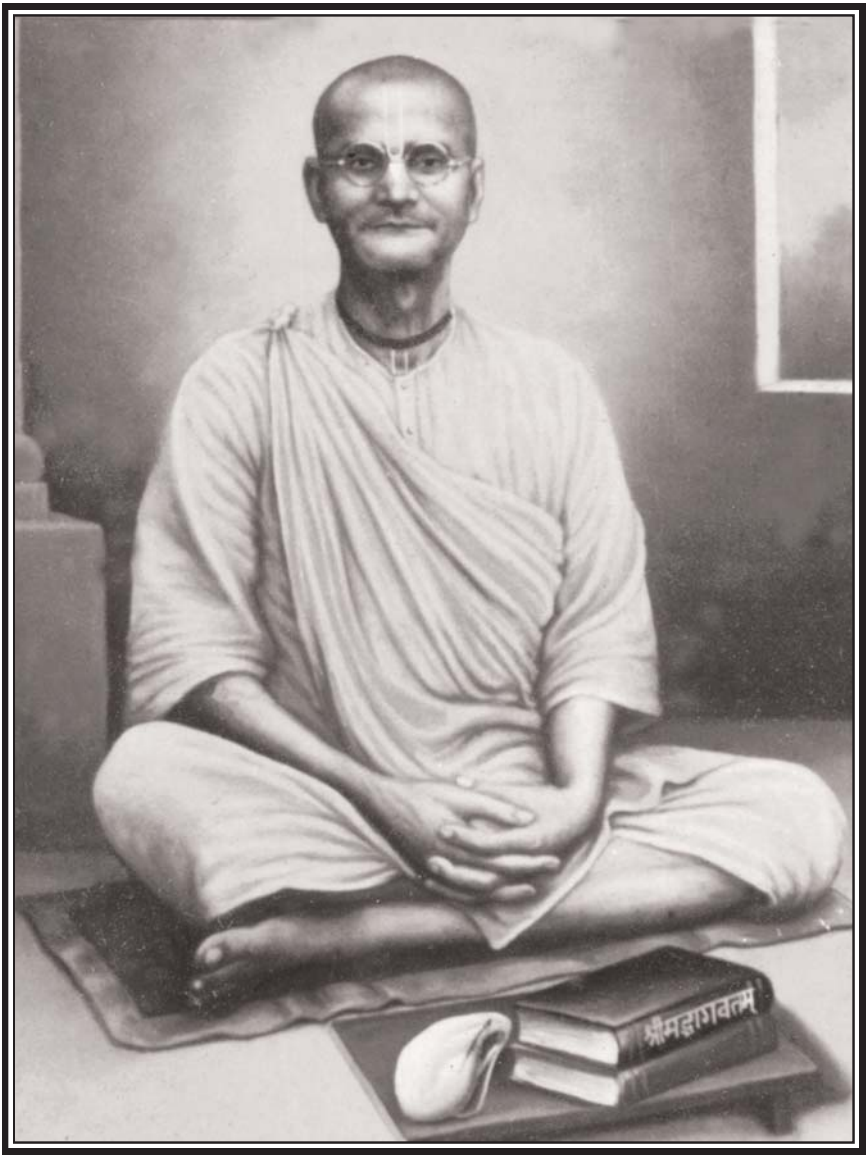
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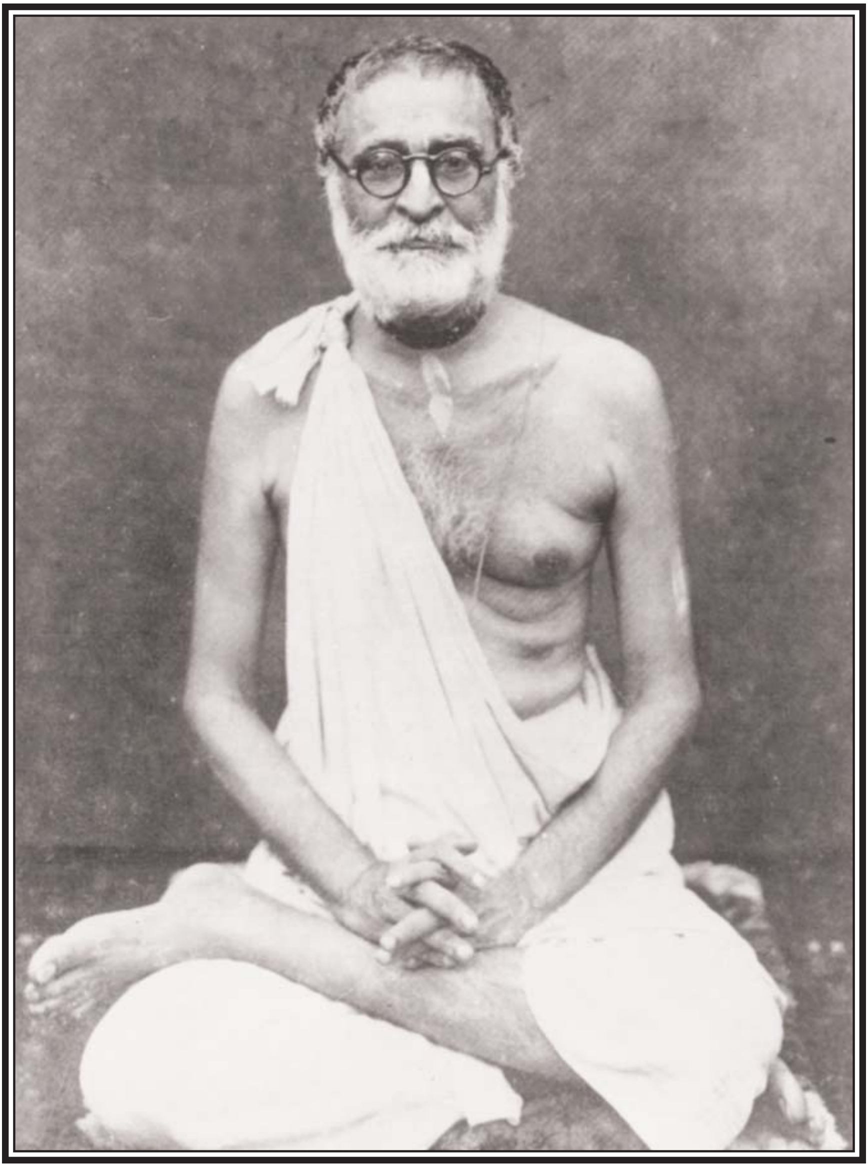
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Preface

Respected Reader,

Every year, by the order of his *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja travels two times around the world, preaching the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and pure love. Last winter, in early December of 2002, he began his preaching tour in Murwillumbah, Australia. On the last day of his stay in Murwillumbah, he requested that the lectures he had given there on the subject of *guru-tattva*, along with the short talks given by his disciples during those lectures, be published as a booklet. Then, a month later, in mid-January of 2003 in Hilo, Hawaii, he gave two more lectures on the same topic and requested that they be added.

While in Hilo, Śrīla Mahārāja held a special meeting called an *iṣṭagoṣṭhī* (a discussion of spiritual subject matters based on questions and answers). In that meeting he addressed the doubt regarding the necessity of receiving *dīkṣā-mantras* from the bona fide *guru*, and the transcription of that meeting is presented as the last chapter of this booklet.

We offer unlimited obeisances and gratitude to our most worshipable *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda, for first manifesting Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world. He has also manifested the Sanskrit verses, English translations, our previous *ācāryas'* commentaries, and his own Bhaktivedānta purports, to Vedic literatures like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. By his mercy, therefore, we were able to reference all the scriptural quotes given in Śrīla Mahārāja's lectures.

Moreover, besides Śrīla Prabhupāda's giving the Vedic scriptures and their deep meanings to the English-speaking world and also arranging for their translation in over fifty foreign languages, he is their personification. *Śrī guru* is the embodiment of all the

scriptures, and he is such a bona fide *guru*. Before leaving the vision of this world in 1977, he requested his intimate friend and *śikṣā* disciple, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, to continue his mission.

Aspiring for the service of Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇava,

Syāmarāṇī dāsi

More Intimate Than Our Soul

I offer millions of obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and same to my *śikṣā-guru*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja.

I remember a verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that was spoken by Śrī Nārada Ṛṣi to Vasudeva, the father of Kṛṣṇa.[1] This verse was then re-told by Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī to Parīkṣit Mahārāja, who was cursed to die by the bite of a snake-bird after seven days:

bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet taṁ
bhaktyaikayeśaṁ guru-devatātmā
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.37)

> Fear arises when a living entity misidentifies himself as the material body because of absorption in the external, illusory energy of the Lord, called *māyā*. When the living entity thus turns away from the Supreme Lord, he also forgets his own constitutional position as a servant of the Lord. Therefore, an intelligent person should engage unflinchingly in the unalloyed devotional service of the Lord, under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, whom he should accept as his worshipable deity and as his very life and soul.

[1] "This is a quotation from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.2.37). It is an instruction given by Kavi Ṛṣi, one of the nine saintly personalities called the nine Yogendras. When Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa's father, asked Devarṣi Nārada, in Dvārakā about devotional service, it was mentioned that previously King Nimi, who was the King of Videha, was instructed by the nine Yogendras. When Śrī Nārada Muni discoursed on *bhāgavata-dharma,* devotional service, he indicated how a conditioned soul can be liberated by engaging in the loving transcendental service of the Lord." (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya-līlā* 20.119) purport by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda).

What are the causes of fear? Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī has explained this. We all fear. Although everyone, in all species of life, throughout all the material universes, only wants peace of mind and happiness, everyone is full of fear.

Happiness and peace of life follow us like a shadow. If we want to take that shadow within our grasp, we will find it to be intangible – with no substance. On the other hand, when we proceed forward, turning away from our shadow, that shadow will follow us. This is the nature of shadows.

Perhaps all of you know the meaning of *māyā* (illusion)? *Māyā*, in the form of economic development, sense gratification and impersonal liberation, is like a shadow. When we turn to her and try to enjoy sense gratification, we find that sense gratification to have no substance. In other words, the desire for material happiness becomes the cause of pain and grief. There is no happiness in the material world, only distress and suffering, and this suffering is experienced as the endless chain of birth and death. No one is happy to be in *māyā*. On the other hand, if we progress towards Kṛṣṇa, all material facility and liberation will follow us.

We are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, and He is an ocean of *ānanda*, unlimited happiness and peace. He is the reservoir of pure *ānanda* and, in fact He Himself is *ānanda*. Because we are His parts and parcels, by our constitutional position, by nature, our bodies are also made of pure *ānanda*. This refers to our transcendental body, however, not our material body.

bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet taṁ
bhaktyaikayeśaṁ guru-devatātmā

Somehow we have departed from that Supreme Lord, the ocean of *rasa* (transcendental taste) and *ānanda*, and now we are entangled in the deluding potency called *māyā*. *Mā-yā*. We are

seeing that which is not actually a fact to be a fact. Whatever we see or feel by our sensory perception is *māyā*. When we first departed from Kṛṣṇa, when we first forgot Him, *māyā* came at once and attacked us. She defeated us and put us in her jail. What is that jail? It is this body and mind. Actually there are two jails, one within the other. This gross body is the outer jail and the subtle body is the inner jail. We have been suffering and fearing since time immemorial, and we are never free from that.

Parīkṣit Mahārāja asked Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, "How can we come out of this endless chain of birth and death? How can we get free from *māyā*?" Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī replied, "*Tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet taṁ / bhaktyaikayeśaṁ guru-devatātmā.*"

Being in *māyā*, we cannot become free from *māyā* at once and go to the spititual realm of Goloka Vṛndāvana. This is possible only by the help of Vaiṣṇavas, pure devotees. By the association of Vaiṣṇavas we can have a very pure *guru* – not an imitation *guru* but a *sad-guru* (a self-realized *guru*). If we take shelter in his lotus feet, he will take full charge of our lives. He will take all kinds of responsibility for our lives and he will teach how to do devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

Guru-devatātmā. First, we must think that *guru* is our *ātmā*, our life and soul. Being totally surrendered to him, we must depend solely on him. *Tan ābhajet. Tan* means the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. If we serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of *sad-guru*, then certainly, like magic, we will be out of *māyā*. We will see that our transcendental form has manifested, that we are serving Kṛṣṇa, and that we are now bathing in the endless ocean of *ānanda* and *rasa*. At that time, we will also be embodiments of *ānanda*, and we will simultaneously be the enjoyers of *ānanda* by serving.

Try to realize all these facts. It is not sufficient to simply hear about this and tell others. We will have to be established in this truth. We are in deep *māyā*, and to the extent we are in *māyā* we are that far away from Kṛṣṇa. Our only hope is the fact that Kṛṣṇa has sent *sad-guru* and Vaiṣṇavas to this world. I realize this; I was a third-

class bogus person, but my *gurudeva* picked me up and engaged me in this transcendental service.

To give the happiness of direct service to the Divine Couple Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is the mission of ancient scriptures like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and great spiritual masters like Śrī Nārada Ṛṣi, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, our *guru-varga* (disciplic succession), and especially, in Western countries, *parama-pujyapāda* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja – who ordered me to also preach it.

I request you all to understand these eternal truths and be established in them, and to also preach this mission of the succession of spiritual masters, called *guru-paramparā*, to others. If you are practicing but not preaching, you are selfish. Do not be weak. Preach.

It is stated in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*: "*sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatāṁ tanu-vāṅ-manobhir.*" If you are wearing the saffron cloth of a renunciate (*brahmacārī* or *sannyāsī*), do not marry and do not fall down. If you are *gṛhastha* (a householder), then remain *gṛhastha*. But after you are fifty years old, try to come out of *gṛhastha* life. Do not engage your whole life in the *gṛhastha āśrama*. If you can be a *gṛhastha* like Prahlāda Mahārāja or the Pāṇḍavas, that is fine; but that is very rare.

Today is Guru Day

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja: What is the meaning of the verse I spoke about in this morning's class?

bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet taṁ
bhaktyaikayeśaṁ guru-devatātmā
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.37)

What is the meaning of the last line of this verse – *"bhaktyaikayeśaṁ guru-devatātmā?"*

Śrīpāda Padmanābha Mahārāja: In this verse it has been said that one must accept *śrī gurudeva*, who is the non-different manifestation of the Supreme Lord within this world (*sākṣāt-hari*), and who is coming as an emissary of the Supreme Lord to rescue the condition souls. *Kṛṣṇa-kṛpā śrī mūrti*, the very personification of the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, is coming to the conditioned soul to bring him back to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. How should that soul who is aspiring for freedom receive this pure representative of Kṛṣṇa? He should receive him as his most worshipable lord – just as one would worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. *Bhaktyaikayeśaṁ guru-devatātmā* means that he will have one-pointed *bhakti* – one-pointed faith and devotion – to the lotus feet of his *guru*. If he develops this one-pointed devotion, he will also consider that *śrī guru* is more dear to him than his own life.

By the mercy of *śrī guru*, Bhagavān gives His mercy. "*Yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi* – without that mercy of the representative of the Supreme Lord, it is not actually possible to attain His lotus feet." If *sad-guru* is not pleased, the conditioned soul remains within this world.

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:] This is a very good explanation. We should try not only to speak, but also to follow. If a devotee is doing a great deal of chanting, reading and glorifying Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but he is not following his *gurudeva*, what will be the result?

[Śrīpāda Araṇya Mahārāja:] Śrīla Gurudeva is raising the point that if a disciple is carefully engaged in regulative devotional practices (*sādhana*) but he has no faith in *guru*, what will be the result? It will be zero. This has been described in many places in *śāstra*. Kṛṣṇa Himself has said in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.19.21): "*mad-bhakta-pūjābhyadhikā* – the worship of My devotees is better than worship of Me." He also says, "That person who says he is My devotee but who is not devoted to My devotee, is not My devotee at all." Kṛṣṇa rejects that person.

yāha bhāgavata paḍa vaiṣṇavera sthāne
ekānta āśraya kara caitanya-caraṇe
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya-līlā* 5.131)

If you want to understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you must approach a self-realized Vaiṣṇava and hear from him. You can do this when you have completely taken shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

If you want to understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you must surrender yourself unto the lotus feet of a *bhakta-bhāgavata* (pure devotee).

naṣṭa-prāyeṣv abhadreṣu
nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā
bhagavaty uttama-śloke
bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.18)

By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto

the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.

If one wants to have all of the *anarthas* covering his transcendental knowledge destroyed, then *nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā*:

eka bhāgavata baḍa—bhāgavata-śāstra
āra bhāgavata—bhakta bhakti-rasa-pātra
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 1.99)

One of the *bhāgavatas* is the great scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and the other is the pure devotee absorbed in the mellows of loving devotion.

dui bhāgavata dvārā diyā bhakti-rasa
tāṅhāra hṛdaye tāṅra preme haya vaśa
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 1.100)

Through the actions of these two *bhāgavatas* the Lord instills the mellows of transcendental loving service into the heart of a living being, and thus the Lord, in the heart of His devotee, comes under the control of the devotee's love.

Only by the combined actions of the book *bhāgavata* (scripture) and the pure devotee *bhāgavata* do the mellows of *bhakti-rasa* enter someone's heart.

nikuñja-yūno rati-keli-siddhyai
yā yālibhir yuktir apekṣaṇīyā
tatrāti-dākṣyād ati-vallabhasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam
(*Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam* 6)

Śrī gurudeva is always present with the *sakhis*, planning the arrangements for the perfection of Yugala-kiśora's amorous pastimes (*rati-keli*) within the *kuñjas* of Vṛndāvana. Because he is so expert in making these tasteful arrangements for Their pleasure,

he is very dear to Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. I offer prayers unto his lotus feet.

Kṛṣṇa is always feeling separation from Rādhika, and Rādhika is feeling separation from Kṛṣṇa. How indebted They feel to that personality who is so expert that she can bring them together to meet! Even an ordinary conditioned soul in this world gives his life and surrenders at the lotus feet of that person who is very dear. Similarly, that devotee who fulfills the innermost heart's desire of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa will automatically become dear to Them. And if one surrenders to that pure devotee's lotus feet, then, through that pure Vaiṣṇava, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa will shower Their mercy on him and quickly bring him to Their lotus feet.

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has given the instruction in his song *Śrī Guru-caraṇa-padma*:

guru-mukha-padma-vākya cittete kariyā aikya
āra nā kariha mane āśā

Here is the meaning of the words *guru-devatātmā* – one should make his heart one with the words emanating from the lotus mouth of a *sad-guru.*

śrī-guru-caraṇe rati, ei se uttama gati,
je prasāde pure sarva āśā

By having *rati*, spontaneous attachment of the heart, for the lotus feet of his *guru*, a disciple will attain his goal. Without the mercy of *guru*, no *sādhana* has any strength or power at all. Therefore, the first *aṅga* (limb) of *bhakti*, out of 64 *aṅgas*, is *guru-pādāśraya* (taking shelter of the lotus feet of *śrī guru*).

guru-pādāśraya, dīkṣā, gurura sevana
sad-dharma-śikṣā-pṛcchā, sādhu-mārgānugamana
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 22.115)

> On the path of regulative devotional service, one must observe the following items: (1) One must accept a bona fide spiritual master. (2) One must accept initiation from him. (3) One must serve him. (4) One must receive instructions from the spiritual master and make inquiries in order to learn devotional service. (5) One must follow in the footsteps of the previous *ācāryas* and follow the directions given by the spiritual master.

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:] Have you heard of Upamanyu? His *guru* once told him, "Oh, you go out to graze cows all day and you do not bring with you anything to eat, and yet you are very healthy and fat. Why is that? Do you drink milk from the cows' udders?" Upamanyu replied, "Yes I do." His *guru* told him, "Don't drink it anymore," but he did not tell him what he would be allowed to eat or drink. During the next days, Upamanyu continued to go out. After some days his *guru* said, "You still look very fat. Are you drinking milk? What are you doing?" Upamanyu told him, "I am only eating the foam that accumulates on the mouth of the cows – nothing else." His *guru* then asked him, "Have I told you to eat that? Don't eat it." Then, without Upamanyu asking what to eat and without his *gurudeva* telling him what he would be allowed to eat, *gurudeva* went away. His *gurudeva* was not actually displeased with him. He was only acting displeased in order to test his disciple's obedience.

On the next day the cows returned without Upamanyu, and his *guru* went out in search for him. He called out, "Upamanyu, where are you? Where are you?" He heard a sound from the well, and that sound was the voice of Upamanyu calling, "Gurudeva, I am here in this well." Gurudeva asked, "What are you doing in there?" Upamanyu replied, "Gurudeva, you told me not to take milk or foam. So I became so hungry that I drank the milk of a leaf of an ekwan plant – and then I discovered that it was poisonous. By drinking it, I became totally blind." Now showing his pleasure, Upamanyu's *guru* said, "You have followed my instructions!" He took him out of the well and blessed him by saying, "All the knowledge of the Vedas will now enter your heart." Then, at once, all the scriptures (like Śrutis, Vedas, Upaniṣads) and all varieties of

knowledge were inspired in his heart.

In the history of Aruṇi, and also in the history of Sudāmā and Kṛṣṇa, we find similar miraculous results as the fruit of surrender to *śrī gurudeva*. There is no possibility of attaining *bhakti* if we do not totally follow our *gurudeva*.

Today, the day that begins our preaching tour, is like "Guru Day."

What if a Guru is not Pure?

tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātaṁ
brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.3.21)

> Any person who is seriously desirous of achieving real happiness must seek out a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of a spiritual master is that he must have realized the conclusion of the scriptures by deliberation and arguments and thus be able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken complete shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, are to be understood as bona fide spiritual masters.

Suppose a person unfortunately took initiation from an unqualified *guru* who was not on the *stage* of a *mahā-bhāgavata* (fully self-realized soul). That *guru* was not realized in the established truths. The word *śabde* means *śāstras* like the Vedas, Upaniṣads, and so on. It also means the holy name. *Pare* means the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. That *guru* had no realization of Kṛṣṇa or His names or His glories as told in *śāstra*, and he was only on the level of *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* – but still he thought he was *guru*. He had many worldly desires, such as the desire for name, fame and wealth, and someone unfortunately took *harināma* and *dīkṣā* from him.[2]

Do the verses that glorify the qualifications of *guru* apply to that *guru* or not? Should the disciple obey that *guru* with the attitude of

[2] "That religious undertaking which bestows *divya-jñāna*, or transcendental knowledge, and destroys *pāpa* (sin), *pāpa-bīja* (the seed of sin), and *avidyā* (ignorance) to the root is called *dīkṣā* by learned authorities in the absolute truth." (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, 2.9) *Dī* means transcendental realization of ones relationship with Kṛṣṇa, and *kṣā* means destruction of the above-mentioned obstacles. Therefore, unless one receives initiation from a *mahā-bhāgavata* devotee, he is not receiving *dīkṣā* in the real sense.

surrender ordered by all the *śāstras*? Should he follow that *guru* totally or not? Can a person acquire pure cow milk from a male donkey? Can a person get sweet mangos from a thorn tree? What is the disciple's duty towards that kind of *guru*?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Maharaja:] We must consider that the presence of *uttama-adhikārīs* (those approaching *prema-bhakti* or those already in *prema-bhakti*), *madhyama-uttama-adhikārīs* (those approaching the stage of *bhava*), and even *madhyama-madhyama-adhikārīs* (those at the stage of *asakti*) are very rare in this world. It is very rare, therefore, to have a *guru* of this caliber. What should we do under these circumstances? We will have to take a *guru*. If a *guru* is not *śābde pare ca niṣṇātam*, if he has not realized the established truths delineated in the Vedas, Upaniṣads and other *śāstras*, but he has very strong faith in his pure *guru* and is sincerely following him, then, even if he is a *madhyama-adhikārī*, do not reject him. If he is always serving his own *mahā-bhāgavata guru* and is obedient both internally and externally to him, then do not reject him. We can give up our *guru* only with the consideration given by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī in his *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*:

avaiṣṇava-mukhodgīrṇaṁ
pūtaṁ hari-kathāmṛtam
śravaṇaṁ naiva kartavyaṁ
sarpocchiṣṭaṁ yathā payaḥ

> One should not hear anything about Kṛṣṇa from a non-Vaiṣṇava. Milk touched by the lips of a serpent has poisonous effects; similarly, talks about Kṛṣṇa given by a non-Vaiṣṇava are also poisonous.

If a *guru* is not serving his own *gurudeva*, if he has left the process given by him, and, his *guru* is not satisfied by his behavior – only in that case can we reject him. However, if the *guru* is a *madhyama-adhikārī* and sincere, if he is very obedient and following the footsteps of his *guru*, then he will gradually become

uttama-adhikārī. So we should not reject him. At the same time, if he is not perfect and thus cannot remove all our doubts about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, what should we do?

We should offer *praṇāma* to him and ask his permission to have the association of a *mahā-bhāgavata* devotee: A disciple may ask, "May I go to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī?" or "May I go to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī?" or, "May I go to a high class of Vaiṣṇava?" If the *guru* says, "No, you cannot go," then give him up.[3] On the other hand, if he says, "Certainly you can go, and I will also come," then he is a real *guru*. A *guru* who sends his disciple to a superior *guru* for instruction may also be an *uttama-mahā-bhāgavata*, as there are various stages of *uttama-mahā-bhāgavata*, and that *guru* is certainly not to be rejected. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura was a disciple of Śrīla Lokanātha Gosvāmī, but he took permission from him to take shelter of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Śyāmānanda Prabhu also took permission from Śrī Hṛdaya-caitanya for that same shelter of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī.

There are three levels of devotees who can act as *sad-guru*, and they are: (1) *bhagavat-pārṣada-deha-prāpta*, (2) *nirdhūta-kāśayā* and (3) *mūrcchita kāśayā*.[4]

This human life is very rare, so do not waste your time. Try to follow all these principles, and gradually you will develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

[3] Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has stated in his *Bhakti-sandarbha* (*Annucheda* 238): "A *guru* who is envious of pure devotees, who blasphemes them, or behaves maliciously towards them should certainly be abandoned, remembering the verse *guror api avaliptasya*. Such an envious *guru* lacks the mood and character of a Vaiṣṇava. The śāstras enjoin that one should not accept initiation from a non-devotee. Knowing these injunctions of the scriptures, a sincere devotee abandons a false *guru* who is envious of devotees. After leaving one who lacks the true qualities of a *guru*, if a devotee is without a spiritual guide, his only hope is to seek out a *mahā-bhāgavata* Vaiṣṇava and serve him. By constantly rendering service to such a pure devotee, one will certainly attain the highest goal of life."

[4] "*Bhagavat-pārṣada-deha-prāpta* – After giving up the gross material body, those who have perfected themselves through the practice of *bhakti* obtain *sac-cid-ānanda* spiritual forms which are just suitable for the service of the Lord as

associates (*pārṣadas*). Such persons are the best of all *uttama-bhāgavatas.*

Nirdhūta-kāśayā – Those who, although still residing within the gross material body made of five elements, have no trace of material desire (*vāsanā*) nor any material impressions (*saṁskāras*) within their hearts are called *nirdhūta-kāśayā* (who have thrown off all material impurities). They belong to the intermediate class of *uttama-bhāgavatas.*

Mūrcchita-kāśayā – Those pursuing the path of *bhakti* in whose hearts there remains a trace of desire (*vāsanā*) and impressions (*saṁskāras*), based on the material mode of goodness, are known as *mūrcchita-kāśayā.* Due to influence of their *bhakti-yoga,* these *vāsanās* and *saṁskāras* remain in a dormant or unconscious state. As soon as there is a favorable opportunity, their worshipful object, Śrī Bhagavān, somehow causes their desire to be consumed and attracts them to His lotus feet. Such elevated souls belong to the preliminary (*kaniṣṭha*) stage of *uttama-bhāgavatas.*" (*Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*)

Even Kṛṣṇa Accepted a Guru

Everywhere in Vedānta, in the Upaniṣads, and especially in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *sad-guru* has been glorified. The holy name is transcendental; this is true. It is written in *śāstra*, and we hear from so many persons, that we should chant *harināma*. But someone may say, "I have read here and there that we should chant *harināma*; so I am chanting. What, then, is the need of a *guru*, who is like an agent, a broker, or a mediator? Ajāmila easily went to Vaikuṇṭha, the Lord's transcendental abode of opulence, without knowing the glories of *harināma* in the beginning. We can chant *harināma* without accepting a *guru*."

If one is chanting without being under the guidance of a *guru*, what will be the result? Such a person can only chant *aparādha* (offenses to the name), except in a rare case, such as in the case of Ajāmila. It is stated in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya-līlā* 19.151):

brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja

> According to their *karma*, all living entities are wandering throughout the entire universe. Some of them are being elevated to the upper planetary systems, and some are going down into the lower planetary systems. Out of many millions of wandering living entities, one who is very fortunate gets an opportunity to associate with a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. By the mercy of both Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service.

Bhakti develops from the seed of *bhakti* given by *guru-rupi-kṛṣṇa*, Kṛṣṇa in the form of *guru*. Kṛṣṇa does not directly give that seed to anyone. He either gives it through *śrī guru*, or He Himself becomes *guru* and then gives it.

Without accepting *guru*, the name one chants is not transcendental. That name will fulfill your worldly desires, even up

to *mukti* (liberation), but not more than this. Ajāmila had no *guru* at first. He named his son Nārāyaṇa, one of the Lord's names, at the *nāma-saṁskāra*, the ritualistic ceremony in which babies are given their name. By chance, because he lived in the Vedic culture, he named his son Nārāyaṇa, and by his recitation of that name he began his chanting of *nāma-ābhāsa* (the clearing stage of chanting). That was his first *nāma-ābhāsa*, and after that he would daily call out, "O Nārāyaṇa, come on, come on!" By continually doing this, his *nāma-ābhāsa* continued.

Later, when Ajāmila was dying, he saw the ferocious forms of the Yamadūtas (constables of the god of death). Being very fearful, the name of his son automatically came to his throat and he called out, "Nārāyaṇa!" At that time, at the moment of death, the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa sent His four messengers, the Viṣṇudūtas, and Ajāmila heard their dialogue as they drove out the Yamadūtas. He heard the holy name and glorification of the name of Nārāyaṇa from the Viṣṇudūtas, and thus he received the seed of *śuddha-nāma* (the pure name) from them. By this he received the seed of *bhakti*, his life returned, and he thought, "The holy name that I heard from the four Viṣṇudūtas is so powerful! And the glory of that name is so wonderful! Now that I have received this *mantra*, I must give up this wife, that wife, all my children, and all my possessions." He left everything and went to Haridwar, where he bathed in the Ganges, sat down on its bank, began chanting, and eventually began to chant *śuddha-nāma.*

After some time the Viṣṇudūtas again came to Ajāmila, and this time they said, "Come with us and sit in this chariot-airplane." By now Ajāmila had reached the stages of *bhava*, and then *prema*. By continuously chanting, "*oṁ namo nārāyaṇāya*," he attained *vaikuṇṭha-rati*. His *rati* (*prema*) was not *vṛndāvana-rati*, not *mādhurya-mayi prema* (loving Godhead with intimacy), but rather it was *aiśvarya-mayi prema* (love of Godhead in awe and reverence, with knowledge of His opulence).

Ajāmila told the Viṣṇudūtas, "When you drove away the Yamadūtas, I wanted to speak with you and touch your feet, but you

disappeared. Now you have appeared again and you are telling me to go with you. How did this come to be?"

The Viṣṇudūtas replied, "We gave you the seed of the pure name and we gave you the seed of *bhakti-latā* (the creeper of devotion). By chanting and regularly bathing in the Ganges you are now purified. You have attained *vaikuṇṭha-rati* and are qualified to come to Vaikuṇṭha." Then they took him there.

By the time the Viṣṇudūtas appeared to Ajāmila for the second time, he had become totally free from all material desires. In the case of Dhruva Mahārāja, however, although he was a disciple of Nārada, he still had a slight attachment to his mother. It was for this reason that he could not go to the Vaikuṇṭha that is situated beyond the sum total of all the material universes, called *mahat-tattva*. Rather, he went to Dhruvaloka, a spiritual planet situated near Rāma-priya Vaikuṇṭha, within this universe.

Vālmīki Ṛṣi was also a disciple of Nārada. Prior to meeting Nārada, he had been a dacoit. He had killed millions of *brāhmaṇas* (the learned and priestly class) and *tapasvīs* (ascetics) and had stolen their wealth. When Nārada Ṛṣi met him, he preached to him about the glories of Bhagavān, the Supreme Lord, and at last he said, "You should sit here. I am giving you the seed of the pure name. You should chant 'Rāma'." Vālmīki was not qualified to chant the name of Rāma and, understanding this, Nārada told him, "If you cannot chant the name of Rāma, then chant *Ma-ra, ma-ra, ma-ra* (death, death, death)." Vālmīki replied, "Oh, I can do that," and he began chanting *Mara, mara*. Since he was a disciple of Nārada, he was able to get such a concession.

What became of Vālmīki? After many thousands of years his chanting of "*mara*" turned into "Rāma", and then he became qualified to write *rāma-līlā*, the pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form of Rāma. He saw that *līlā* in his *samādhi* trance and thus, as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was written by Śrī Vyāsadeva in *samādhi-bhāṣya*, trance language, in the same way *Rāmāyaṇa* was written by Śrī Vālmīki. Vālmīki saw everything about *rāma-līlā* in his trance, even before Rāma had actually exhibited His

pastimes, and then he wrote down those pastimes in his *Śrī Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa*.

We should understand that without *guru* we are bound to have material attachment and we are bound to commit offenses to the holy name (*nāma-aparādha*). If the seed of bhakti and one's relationship with Kṛṣṇa (*sambandha-jñāna*) are not given by a pure *guru*, there can be no *śabda-brahma*, experience of transcendental sound (sound coming from the transcendental realm). Acceptance and surrender to a *sad-guru* is therefore essential.

Although Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He also accepted a *guru*. The *gopis* once teased Him by saying, "You have no *guru*?" Kṛṣṇa replied, "Who has said this? My *gurudeva* is Bhāguri Ṛṣi."

It is generally accepted that Kṛṣṇa's *guru* was Sāndīpani Muni, but actually Sāndīpani Muni was like a teacher. He taught Kṛṣṇa the 64 arts, and therefore he was like a schoolteacher. Kṛṣṇa received *rādhā-mantra* from Bhāguri Ṛṣi, and therefore it is Bhāguri Ṛṣi who is really the *guru* of Kṛṣṇa. In this world, when Kṛṣṇa or any of His incarnations descend, they accept a *guru*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself, also accepted a *guru*. He accepted *harināma* and *gopal-mantra* from Īśvara Purīpāda, and He Himself said to Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī when asked why he engaged in *harināma-saṅkīrtana* instead of studying Vedānta:

prabhu kahe—śuna, śrīpāda, ihāra kāraṇa
guru more mūrkha dekhi' karila śāsana
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 7.71)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied to Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī, "My dear sir, kindly hear the reason. My spiritual master considered Me a fool, and therefore he chastised Me."

mūrkha tumi, tomāra nāhika vedāntādhikāra
'kṛṣṇa-mantra' japa sadā,—ei mantra-sāra
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 7.72)

"'You are a fool,' he said. 'You are not qualified to study Vedānta philosophy, and therefore You must always chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, which is the essence of all mantras, or Vedic hymns.'"

Caitanya Mahāprabhu quoted his spiritual master as saying, "You have no qualification to enter Vedānta philosophy. You are foolish and ignorant, and you should therefore simply chant *harināma*."

harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 17.21)

In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, the only means of deliverance is chanting the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way.

His *gurudeva* gave Him this *mantra*:

hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare

Why did Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu not utter the name of His *sannyāsa-guru*, Keśava Bhāratī? After all, acceptance of *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life, is not a small thing. It is not less than *harināma* or *dīkṣā* initiation. The reason is that Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself had first spoken the *sannyāsa-mantra* into the ear of Keśava Bhāratī, and after that Śrī Keśava Bhāratī spoke it into Mahāprabhu's ear.

Therefore, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu only told Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī the name of Śrī Īśvara Purī, and He said that the *mantra* given by Śrī Īśvara Purī had made Him like a madman. In His human-like pastimes, if these *mantras* had not been given by Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda, the result could not be as it was. Mahāprabhu

would not have developed His relationship with Kṛṣṇa and He would not have tasted such *prema*. We should try to know all these truths.

Śrī Guru – Heavier Than God

Very quickly, in a couple of years, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja preached throughout the world – in the mountains, on ocean islands, in the North, East, South and West. I see his glories everywhere.

Although Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja actually came to this world as a representative of our *guru-paramparā*, some people want him to be the only *guru*. They want that there be only one *guru* – for the past, present and future. They want to deny our *guru-paramparā*. This is very bad; and we should not follow this. Rather, we should know what is *guru-tattva*.

Guru means "heavy", more so than anyone else in this world – even more than Kṛṣṇa Himself. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa may come to that *guru* and take his footdust – it may be. It is written in *Śrī Gīta-govinda* by Śrīla Jayadeva Gosvāmī that Kṛṣṇa said to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, "*Dehī-pada-pallavam-udharam* – please be merciful and place Your lotus feet on My head. Be pleased with Me." Kṛṣṇa sometimes also says this to the *gopīs* who serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā more than they serve Him. He may pray to them, "Please place your footdust on My head." This is *guru-tattva*.

In other words, all the pure *gurus* in the disciplic line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, in their spiritually perfected forms, are *gopī* maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The subject of *guru-tattva* is the essence of all our *bhakti* literature. This subject is very heavy, and therefore you should hear it with the core of your hearts. We can only worship Kṛṣṇa after we have worshipped *guru*.

All of us in this world have turned away from Kṛṣṇa. Whether we accept it or not, it is true. Although we are greatly suffering, we do not realize it. Why not? We have drunk such a large quantity of the alcohol of *māyā* that we have become completely mad; and in this madness we think ourselves very happy. You should know that one day you will have to give up your bodies and all that you have collected in this world. One day you will surely have to be old. Old

age is very eagerly waiting to embrace you, and none of you will escape it. A devotee of the caliber of Śrī Nārada Muni can escape this *māyā* and its presentation of old age, but you are not like Nārada Muni. You will have to suffer if you are not careful.

It is stated in the Vedas:

yasya deve parā bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanaḥ
(*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23)

Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed.

This instruction has been given since ancient times: "*Yasya deve parā bhaktir.*" Those who are suffering and who want to be happy in this world and in the next, especially those living in the present age of quarrel and hypocrisy called Kali-yuga, should serve Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord. And, not less than Him, such persons must serve the bona fide *gurudeva*. Here in this verse the word *para-bhakti* has been used, and we should therefore know its meaning:

anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyaṁ
jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-
śīlanaṁ bhaktir uttamā
(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.11)

The cultivation of activities which are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or, in other words, the uninterrupted flow of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, performed through all endeavors of the body, mind and speech, and through the expression of various spiritual sentiments (*bhāvas*), which is not covered by *jñāna* and *karma*, and which is devoid of all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is called *uttama-bhakti*, pure devotional service.

Parā-bhakti is the continuous, uninterrupted flow of the activities performed by our body, mind, words and moods (*bhāvas*), which are executed only for the benefit of Kṛṣṇa. Such activities are not disturbed or covered by *jñāna* (mental speculation or knowledge leading to impersonal liberation) and *karma* (the desire to enjoy the fruits of ones activities), and it is performed under the guidance of *guru-tattva*. If there is a lack of the above symptoms in a devotee's activities but *bhakti* is there to some degree, we can still call it *bhakti* – but not *parā-bhakti*.

The Vedas tell us that *parā-bhakti* is certainly to be applied to Kṛṣṇa, but first it must be applied to *guru*. If one has no *guru*, all his devotional activities will be like zero; only worldly fruits will come. If one thinks, "I am already chanting, remembering and performing *arcanā* (regulative worship of the Deity)," but he is not truly initiated by a bona fide *guru*, the fruit of his activities will only be worldly. Intoxicated by sense enjoyment such a person may think himself happy, but he will not be actually happy. It is therefore stated in *śāstra*:

brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 19.151)

> According to their *karma*, all living entities are wandering throughout the entire universe. Some of them are being elevated to the upper planetary systems, and some are going down into the lower planetary systems. Out of many millions of wandering living entities, one who is very fortunate gets an opportunity to associate with a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. By the mercy of both Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service.

What is the meaning of *guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde*? This generally means that one can attain the *bhakti-latā-bīja* – the seed of *parā-bhakti* – by the combined mercy of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa. In this connection, however, there is another meaning. Here the meaning is

that the bona fide *guru* is a manifestation of Kṛṣṇa Himself. Kṛṣṇa does not come to us, but the *guru* may come, as Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja came and traveled everywhere. You should realize that the mercy of Kṛṣṇa first manifests as the mercy of *guru*. From the bona fide *guru*, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself as His manifestation (*āśrayā-vigraha*), we can have the seed of *bhakti*. What is the the seed of *bhakti*? It is *kṛṣṇa-sevā-vāsanā*, the desire to serve Kṛṣṇa. This desire will come only from *gurudeva*, the bona fide Vaiṣṇava, and it does not matter whether he is acting as a *śikṣā-guru* or a *dīkṣā-guru*. He may act as a *śikṣā-guru* in the case of a disciple who is initiated by a bona fide *guru* but he cannot avail his *śikṣā*. The seed of the *bhakti* creeper comes from this high class of *gurudeva*, and that is why *śāstra* states:

yasya deve parā bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanaḥ

One can know who is Kṛṣṇa only from *gurudeva*, and if a *guru* is not bona fide, Kṛṣṇa cannot be known. Among the 64 limbs of *bhakti* described in *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, the first four are in relation to *śrī gurudeva*. The first is *guru-pādāśraya*, which means acceptance of the shelter of the lotus feet of *gurudeva*, and that shelter is taken through hearing. That is *harināma* initiation in the real sense. Those who take shelter of such a *guru* can progress quickly in *bhakti*. After *guru-pādāśraya*, there is *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā*. *Dīkṣā* means initiation and *śikṣā* means instruction. The disciple will begin to understand his *gurudeva's* instructions, and then he will try to follow them. You should take initiation from that *guru*, but be very careful. If a *guru* is bona fide and you have some doubt in his character or teachings, Kṛṣṇa will never accept you.

yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi
dhyāyaṁ stuvaṁs tasya yaśas tri-sandhyaṁ
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam
(*Śrī Gurvāṣṭakam* 8)

Only by the mercy of *śrī gurudeva* can one receive the mercy of Kṛṣṇa; without his grace the living entities cannot make any advancement or be delivered. I meditate three times a day on the glories of *śrī gurudeva* and recite *stava-stuti* (prayers) unto his lotus feet.

ajñaś cāśraddadhānaś ca
saṁśayātmā vinaśyati
nāyaṁ loko 'sti na paro
na sukhaṁ saṁśayātmanaḥ
(*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.40)

Ignorant and faithless persons who doubt the revealed scriptures do not attain God consciousness; they fall down. For the doubting soul there is happiness neither in this world nor in the next.

Suppose a *guru* is bona fide, and he is preaching and serving his *gurudeva*. If anyone doubts him and thinks, "My *gurudeva* is an ordinary man and he does not know this and that," or "I know better than him, at least in ordinary matters," that person falls down from Kṛṣṇa consciousness and no one will be able to save him. We should be very careful not to associate with such a person. Also, do not associate with anyone who associates with that type of wretched person. Try to behave as you would behave regarding the passing of stool. If we can pass stool easily, we are very happy. We feel great relief if there is a motion. If the stool remains inside the body, we will be restless. We will not be able to do *bhakti* or anything else. Similarly, you will surely have to give up bad association for your entire life. If you want *bhakti*, if you want to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, then do not mix with those persons who doubt a *guru* who is bona fide, who is serving his *gurudeva*, and who is preaching

throughout the world. *Parama-pujyapāda* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja had many thousands of disciples, but so many of them have completely given up their Kṛṣṇa consciousness due to their doubts.

You may have heard the names of Droṇācārya and Ekalavya. They were both present in this world 5000 years ago, at the time of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes here. Ekalavya went to Droṇācārya and told him, "I accept you as my *guru.*" Droṇācārya replied, "I knew you would be coming to me even before you came. I know your heart and pulse; you are very much against pure *bhaktas* and therefore I will not teach you archery." Ekalavya then said, "I have accepted you as my *guru*, so I must learn something about archery from you." Droṇācārya again refused and said, "I cannot give lessons to you. If you learn archery, you will become a burden to the entire world."

Still determined, Ekalavya went to the forest and made a clay statue of Droṇācārya. He offered *praṇāma* to that statue and, repeatedly taking the footdust of that statue, he began to practice archery with great faith. Practicing archery while regularly performing *arcanā* and offering flowers to Droṇācārya, Ekalavya became a master. Then, one day, Droṇācārya went to the forest and saw Ekalavya, and he became astonished to see how he had learned such a high class of archery. When Ekalavya saw Droṇācārya, he fell at his lotus feet and told him, "What I have learned, I have learned from you." Droṇācārya then told Ekalavya, "If you have really learned archery from me, then I want some *guru-dakṣiṇā.*" Ekalavya said, "Whatever you wish, I am prepared to give. I am also prepared to give my life if you want that." Droṇācārya replied, "I want your right-hand thumb." You would not be able to do this if you were asked to do so by your *gurudeva*, but Ekalavya did it immediately.

Ekalavya was still able to shoot with his remaining four fingers, but what was the result? During the Mahābhārata battle he wanted to fight with Kṛṣṇa and kill Him; therefore, Kṛṣṇa took His Sudarśana *cakra* and very easily cut off his head.

In this connection, the *śraddhā*, faith, of Ekalavya is compared to a clay pot. If one places a clay pot in fire, it will crack. The

śraddhā of Ekalavya was like that clay. He was selfish and wanted to ruin the devotees, and because of this ulterior motive his *śraddhā* in making and worshipping a statue of Droṇācārya was really not *śraddhā* at all. Our *śraddhā* should not be like that of Ekalavya; it should be like that of Arjuna. Always remember this and do not associate with Ekalavya. Some ignorant devotees, who are not actually devotees, have named their sons or disciples "Ekalavya". We should always be careful not to have the misconception that he was a good disciple.

Someone may ask, "If a *guru* is not an *uttama-adhikārī*, how can he help his disciples? He may speak and behave incorrectly." The reply to such a doubt is that if a *guru* is in the final stage of *madhyama-adhikārī*, if he is *madhyama-uttama*, if he is very sincere and continually serving his *uttama-adhikārī gurudeva*, and if he has no worldly desires, he will very soon become an *uttama-adhikārī*. Mahāprabhu confirmed this truth at the Ratha-yātrā festival while speaking to the inhabitants of Kulīna-grāma. Do not doubt this.

Kṛṣṇa has said in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.23):

ye 'py anya-devatā-bhaktā
yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya
yajanty avidhi-pūrvakam

> Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only Me, O son of Kuntī, but they do so in a wrong way.

Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna that if a person worships a demigod with strong faith in order to fulfill his worldly desires, thinking, "Surely he will fulfill my desire," that person is actually worshiping Kṛṣṇa Himself, but in the wrong way. Someone may directly touch his nose and someone else may touch it by making his hand and finger go all the way around his head before it reaches his nose. Similarly, that person's desires can be fulfilled by Kṛṣṇa alone, whether they are

fulfilled by directly asking Him or by getting them fulfilled in a roundabout way by supplicating the demigods. It is actually Kṛṣṇa who gives their benedictions. The *devatās* are not powerful; they are unable to give any benediction.

In a similar way, a guru may be *madhyama-uttama*, a *madyama-adhikārī* in the final stage; he may not yet be *siddha* (a perfect, self-realized soul) like Śrī Nārada Muni, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, and others. In that case, if he is a sincere devotee and if a disciple follows him with deep faith, who will give the fruit of the disciple's worship? A *madhyama-adhikārī* cannot give it. If one is an *uttama-adhikārī* like Nārada Ṛṣi or Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī or Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, he can give it at once, but a *madhyama-adhikārī* cannot. The *madhyama-adhikārī guru* will tell *hari-kathā* and engage his disciples in such a way that they will advance in *bhakti.* What will be the result? If one has very deep faith in that *guru*, Kṛṣṇa Himself will surely give the fruit, and that fruit will be transcendental. Kṛṣṇa will give that disciple the fruit of the association and shelter of an *uttama-adhikārī guru.*[5] To a devotee initiated by a *madhyama-adhikārī guru* and who really desires to attain the highest goal, Kṛṣṇa gives the association and mercy of an *uttama guru* who can bless the disciple with that goal. Try to understand this. It is not very easy to understand, but try. Do not have any doubt about this.

Uttama-adhikārī gurus are not easily available; they are very rare in this world. Moreover, even if they are available, most people

[5] "It should be understood that a *madhyama-adhikārī,* a second-class devotee, is fully convinced of Kṛṣṇa consciousness but cannot support his convictions with śāstric reference. A neophyte (*kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*) may fall down by associating with non-devotees because he is not firmly convinced and strongly situated. The second-class devotee, even though he cannot support his position with *śāstric* reference, can gradually become a first-class devotee by studying the *śāstras* and associating with a first-class devotee. However, if the second-class devotee does not advance himself by associating with a first-class devotee, he makes no progress. There is no possibility that a first-class devotee will fall down, even though he may mix with non-devotees to preach. Conviction and faith gradually increase to make one an *uttama-adhikārī*, a first-class devotee." (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 22.71 purport)

will not be able to recognize them. For example, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī was naked, and Śrī Vamsidāsa Bābājī put fish bones and other abominable things outside his *bhajana-sthālī*. You would not be able to know that Śrīla Gaura Kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is an *uttama mahā-bhāgavata*. If a *madhyama-uttama guru* who is under the guidance of an *uttama-adhikārī guru* will tell you, or an *uttama-adhikārī* playing the role of a devotee in the stage of *madhyama-adhikārī* will tell you, then you will be able to know. We should be very, very careful about this. Do not have any doubt in that kind of *guru*. If one is *madhyama-uttama*, he can help so much by his direction. The advanced *madhyama-adhikārī* will very soon come to the stage of *rati* (*bhāva*), like Bharata Mahārāja and Ambarīṣa Mahārāja. If a person has doubts in him, do not associate with that person. His association should be given up as one gives up stool after passing it.

The Absolute Necessity of Second Initiation

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:] In my classes I have been explaining the meaning of *bhakti* and I have explained how we can gradually achieve it, beginning from the smallest fraction of *bhakti* called *śraddhā*. We discussed many points, among which was the necessity for *guru-pādāśraya*. In the meantime, a topic has arisen that I want to discuss and clarify. You should very carefully and seriously hear this important subject matter. First, Śrīpād Padmanābha Mahārāja will present the argument; then I will reply to it.

[Śrīpāda Padmanābha Mahārāja:] There is a question concerning the relationship between *gāyatrī-mantra* (*dīkṣā*) and *harināma* initiation. Some persons have presented quotes from Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja in order to present the idea, based upon their own understanding of these quotes, that *harināma* is complete and sufficient in itself for the conditioned soul, and that initiation into the *gāyatrī-mantra* is not actually required. I will read their quotations and then Śrīla Mahārāja will give the clear understanding. First of all they quote Śrīla Prabhupāda in a room conversation in 1973, in Paris, where he says, "Chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Then, as he practices, he becomes more purified. Then second initiation – *gāyatrī-mantra*. The first initiation, according to Jīva Gosvāmī, that is sufficient. Chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, that is sufficient. But still, to purify them more, the second initiation, *gāyatrī*, is given."

That is one quote. Then they quote Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja in his book *Śrī Guru and His Grace*. There he says, "We accept the *mantra* only to help the *nāma-bhajana*, the worship of the holy name. Otherwise it may not be necessary at all. It has been judged in such a way. The name alone can do everything

for a person; it is full and complete. The *gāyatrī-mantra* helps us to do away with the *aparādhas* (offenses) and the *ābhāsa*, or hazy conception. The *gāyatrī-mantra* comes to help us only so far."

With these two quotations, some persons have attempted to support their statement that it is not actually completely essential or necessary for conditioned souls to accept the *gāyatrī-mantra* – *dīkṣā* – because *harināma* is sufficient. They have also suggested that Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja is saying something contrary to Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja. I am also reading the two statements they have quoted from Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja. The first is from his book, *Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha*: "Without the *gopāla-mantra* and the *kāma-gāyatrī*, will our *sādhana* be complete with only the *nāma-saṅkīrtana*? No, because by *nāma-saṅkīrtana* alone we will not be able to chant *śuddha-nāma*, the pure name of Kṛṣṇa." The second quotation they cite from a lecture given by Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja on the topic of *Śrī Bhajana-rahasya*: "Everything is there, but don't think that we can realize all this by chanting *kṛṣṇa-nāma* alone. We must chant *harināma* and *gāyatrī-mantra* as well. If we want full understanding and realization of what is in the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, we must also chant the *gāyatrī-mantras*."

Now we will hear from Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja who will kindly give the proper philosophical conclusion of these points, so that everyone can understand clearly the position of *gāyatrī-mantra* initiation and *harināma* initiation, and their relationship.

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:] I think you have all understood the argument. Now you should try very carefully to understand the reply so that you can reconcile all these statements. Someone has presented the idea that the acceptance of *dīkṣā* is not essential and has thus indirectly indicated the verse:

dīkṣā-puraścaryā-vidhi apekṣā nā kare
jihvā-sparśe ā-caṇḍāla sabāre uddhāre
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 15.108)

> One does not have to undergo initiation or execute the activities required before initiation. One simply has to vibrate the holy name with his lips. Thus, even a man in the lowest class (*caṇḍāla*) can be delivered.

The holy name is sufficient. The holy name is very powerful and can fulfill all desires. The name will even give *vraja-prema*. What, then, is the need of taking initiation? The paper has quoted my statement, along with those of *prapujya-caraṇa* Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja; so, I want to reconcile all the statements.

It is true that *dīkṣā-puraścaryā* (initiation and the purificatory activities performed before initiation) is not needed in all circumstances; but we should know something about the actual meaning of this verse. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda wrote a book of rules and regulations in Deity worship called *Arcana-dīpikā*. There he has explained that *harināma* is *bhāgavata-svarūpa*, the actual form of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā – and for this reason it is stated in *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka*: "*paraṁ vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*." By chanting and remembering Kṛṣṇa's names, all kinds of perfection – like *vraja-prema* and even *rādhā-dāsya* (becoming a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā) – can be attained. In the first stage, however, when a devotee is uttering the holy name, he is full with many *aparādhas* and other *anarthas* such as *laya* (sleep), *vikṣepa* (distraction), *apratipatti* (indifference or disinterest in spiritual topics) and so on. It is guaranteed that such a person cannot utter the pure name; rather, his chanting will be *nāma-aparādha*. Chanting the pure name is only possible after *dīkṣā-saṁskāra*.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains *dīkṣā* in his *Bhakti-sandarbha* (283):

divyaṁ jñānaṁ yato dadyāt kuryāt pāpasya saṅkṣayam
tasmāt dīkṣeti sā proktā deśikais tattva-kovidaiḥ

> *Dīkṣā* is the process by which one can awaken his transcendental knowledge and vanquish all reactions caused by sinful activity. A person expert in the study of the revealed scriptures knows this process as *dīkṣā*. (Quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 15.108, purport)

The *gāyatrī-mantra* gives all kinds of *divya-jñāna*, transcendental knowledge, including the knowledge of *kṛṣṇa-tattva* and *jīva-tattva*, and it also gives a relationship with Kṛṣṇa. *Nāma* alone will not give this relation to the person filled with *anarthas*. All of our *ācāryas*, from top to bottom, have stated that in order to purify us from our sinful reactions and to clear offenses (*anartha-nivṛtti*) so that we can develop the ability to chant the pure name, we must accept *dīkṣā-vidhāna* (the process of initiation). *Dī – kṣā*. *Dī* means *divya-jñāna*, or realized knowledge of our relationship with Kṛṣṇa. *Kṣā* is the washing away of all sins, *aparādhas*, and other impurities. For this, *dīkṣā-vidhāna* is essential. Without *dīkṣā-saṁskāra*, one's relationship with Kṛṣṇa (*sambandha-jñāna*) cannot manifest and one cannot chant *śuddha-nāma*. It is essential to accept *dīkṣā*.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī has written in *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*:

yathā kāñcanatāṁ yāt
kāṁsyaṁ rasa-vidhānataḥ
tathā dīkṣā-vidhānena
dvijatvaṁ jāyate nṛṇām

> As bell metal (a mixture of copper and tin) becomes gold by mixing with mercury, similarly, by the process of *dīkṣā* initiation, a person becomes a *brāhmaṇa*.

Bell metal turns into gold by the help of the element mercury. Similarly, by this element, the process of *dīkṣā*, our chanting of the holy name will become pure; otherwise it is not possible.

If there is no necessity to accept *dīkṣā-mantra*, why did Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda take second

initiation from Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, and why did he give *dīkṣā* initiation to all of his disciples? *Parama-pūjyapāda* Śrīla Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja also took *dīkṣā* from him. If there is no necessity, why did Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura give *dīkṣā* initiation, and why did his disciples accept it?

Not only that, Brahmā received *kāma-gāyatrī* and *gopāla-mantra* from Kṛṣṇa Himself. Brahmā then gave the *dīkṣā-mantra* to Śrī Nārada Ṛṣi, and Nārada gave it to so many disciples. Nārada not only gave *harināma* to Dhruva Mahārāja – he gave him *dīkṣā* by the mantra: *oṁ namo bhagavate vāsudevāya.* Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu took initiation from Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda, who first gave Him *harināma.* Then, to purify that chanting of *nāma*, he gave Him *gopāla-mantra. Gopāla-mantra* is transcendental and ever-existing, and it gives a relationship with Kṛṣṇa as Gopījana-vallabha. We should consider all this evidence.

All the *ācāryas* in our *guru-paramparā* have accepted *dīkṣā mantras.* Can those who say that *harināma* is sufficient for conditioned souls name any *ācārya* in our *guru-paramparā* who has not taken *dīkṣā* initiation? Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, and the Six Gosvāmīs took second initiation. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda also took it. Why did they take *dīkṣā* initiation if it is not essential? You should know the gravity of this truth. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Advaita Ācārya, Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita, Śrī Īśvara Purī and Śrī Mādhavendra Purī have all taken *dīkṣā*. Why, then, should we not take it? Why is it not essential? If it is not essential, then why did Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī write about it in his *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*? Why did Śrī Gopāl Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī also write about it? Did he say it was useless? Those who say that *dīkṣā* is not essential will not be able to answer these questions in hundreds and millions of years.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu took initiation. He is the Lord of lords – Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa combined – and yet He went to Gayā and took initiation. He vividly explained this fact in a gathering of *sannyāsīs* in Kāśī, when those *sannyāsīs* asked Him, "O, you are a very young

and qualified *sannyāsī*. Why do you not hear Vedānta? Why do you engage in singing and dancing and rolling on the ground? A *sannyāsī* should not dance and do all these things."

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied by telling them of the order of His *guru*, Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda. Mahāprabhu said, "*Guru mora mūrkha dekhi*. My Guru Mahārāja told me that because I am foolish and unintelligent, I am not qualified to study Vedānta. He said that instead I should always chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and I should remember this verse:

harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 17.21)

In this Age of Kali there is no other means, no other means, no other means for self-realization than chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name of Lord Hari.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu not only took *harināma* from His *gurudeva*. He also took second initiation through the *gopāla-mantra*. In our *paramparā*, in order to purify one's chanting and to give the chanter a relationship with Kṛṣṇa, who has kindly taken the form of His holy name, the *gopāla-mantra* is given along with *harināma*. Before the time of Mahāprabhu, only *gopāla-mantra* was given. Later, after He manifested pastimes, Śrīla Dhyānacandra Gosvāmī and Śrīla Gopāla-guru Gosvāmī came to this world and gave the regulations we now follow. They gave *brahma-gāyatrī*, *guru-mantra*, *guru-gāyatrī*, *gaura-mantra*, *gaura-gāyatrī*, *kṛṣṇa-mantra* (*gopāla-mantra*) and finally *kāma-gāyatrī*. This is the process followed in our *sampradāya* as begun by Śrīla Gopāla-Guru Gosvāmī, who is a disciple of Vakreśvara Paṇḍita, who is an associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu quoted His *gurudeva* saying, "*kṛṣṇa-mantra japa sadā – ei mantra-sāra*. You must always chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. This is the essence of all *mantras*, or Vedic hymns."

kṛṣṇa-mantra haite habe saṁsāra-mocana
kṛṣṇa-nāma haite pābe kṛṣṇera caraṇa
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 7.73)

> Simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord.

The offenseless chanting of the holy name does not depend on the initiation process. But that name must be the pure name – and how will it become so? It can only be revealed as pure through that *dīkṣā* process; otherwise it is not possible. It is not that the holy name is not pure, but if a person is not a pure devotee he cannot chant the pure name. He can only chant syllables that sound like the name. He can only chant offenses to the name (*nāma-aparādha*) or a semblance of the name (*nāma-ābhāsa*).

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu chanted the pure name. Therefore, He was able to tell His *gurudeva*:

kibā mantra dilā, gosāñi, kibā tāra bala
japite japite mantra karila pāgala
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 7.81)

> My dear lord, what kind of *mantra* have you given Me? I have become mad simply by chanting this *mahā-mantra*!

Caitanya Mahāprabhu told the *sannyāsīs*, "You ask why I dance and sing and roll on the ground. Here is the reason: When My *gurudeva* initiated me, he gave me both the *harināma* and *gopāla-mantra*." Then He said, "*Japite japite mantra*." If He had only received *harināma*, the *mahā-mantra*, He would not have said the word "*mantra*". *Mantra* especially refers to *gopāla-mantra* and *kāma-gāyatrī*. He first received *harināma* and then *gopāla-mantra*. "*Japite japite mantra karila pāgala*. – and this made Me mad. *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* and *mantra* – meaning the *mahā-mantra* and *gopāla mantra* – made Me like a madman."

For those who always remember and meditate on the *gopāla-mantra* and *kāma-gāyatrī*, by the power of the *mantra*, *rati* (*bhāva-bhakti*) will at once enter their hearts.

It has been written in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya-līlā* 4.192):

dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa
sei-kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama

> At the time of initiation, when a devotee fully surrenders unto the service of the Lord, Kṛṣṇa accepts him to be as good as Himself. First initiation is called *harināma* initiation only, and the second initiation is called *dīkṣā*. *Ātma-samarpaṇa* – at the time of *dīkṣā* the disciple totally surrenders unto the feet of his *gurudeva*. *Sei-kāle* – at that time Kṛṣṇa gives the shelter of His lotus feet, and He makes that disciple *ātma-sama*, very near and dear to Him.

According to the Vaiṣṇava regulative principles, one must be initiated as a *brāhmaṇa*. As quoted in *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (2.6) from the *Viṣṇu-yāmala*, Lord Śaṅkara said to his wife Pārvatī:

adīkṣitasya vāmoru kṛtaṁ sarvaṁ nirarthakam
paśu-yonim avāpnoti dīkṣā-virahito janaḥ

> O Vamaru – O beautiful Pārvatī – regarding those who have not taken *dīkṣā*, all their devotional activities, such as *sādhana, bhajana* and *pūjā*, have all gone in vain. They are all useless. Such persons who are not properly initiated must again enter the many animal species.

It is stated in *Padyāvalī*, a book compiled by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, that *harināma* can give everything, including *kṛṣṇa-premā*, simply by touching the tongue.

ākṛṣṭiḥ kṛta-cetasāṁ sumanasām uccāṭanaṁ cāṁhasām
ācaṇḍālam amūka-loka-sulabho vaśyaś ca mukti-śriyaḥ
no dīkṣāṁ na ca sat-kriyāṁ na ca puraścaryāṁ manāg īkṣate
mantro 'yaṁ rasanā-spṛg eva phalati śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmātmakaḥ

> The holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa is an attractive feature for many saintly, liberal people. It is the annihilator of all sinful reactions and is so powerful that, save for the dumb who cannot chant it, it is readily available to everyone, including the lowest type of man, the *caṇḍāla*. The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is the controller of the opulence of liberation, and it is identical with Kṛṣṇa. When a person simply chants the holy name with his tongue, immediate effects are produced. Chanting the holy name does not depend on initiation, pious activities or the *puraścaryā* regulative principles generally observed before initiation.The holy name does not wait for any of these activities. It is self-sufficient. (Quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 15.110)

But can this occur if one's chanting is not pure? This is the question that has been raised. Can this occur without *dīkṣā*? In the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (17.4–5, 7) it is stated:

vinā yena na siddhaḥ syān
mantro varṣa-śatair api
kṛtena yena labhate
sādhako vāñchitaṁ phalam

puraścaraṇa-sampanno
mantro hi phala-dhāyakaḥ
ataḥ puraṣkriyāṁ kuryāt
mantra-vit siddhi-kaṅkṣayā

puraṣkriyā hi mantrāṇāṁ
pradhānaṁ vīryam ucyate
vīrya-hīno yathā dehī
sarva-karmasu na kṣamaḥ
puraścaraṇa-hīno hi
tathā mantraḥ prakīrtitaḥ

> Without performing the *puraścaryā* activities, one cannot become perfect even by chanting this *mantra* for hundreds of years. But one who has undergone the *puraścaryā-vidhi* process can attain success very easily. If one wishes to perfect his initiation, he must

first undergo the *puraścaryā* activities. The *puraścaryā* process is the life force by which one is successful in chanting the *mantra.* Without the life force, one cannot do anything; similarly, without the life force of *puraścaryā-vidhi*, no *mantra* can be perfected. (Quoted in Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 15.108)

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has quoted a verse in order to further dissolve any misunderstanding in this regard. In his *Bhakti-sandarbha* (283–84), he describes the importance of deity worship and *dīkṣā* initiation as follows:

avasyakat āvaśyakatvaṁ nāsti, tad vināpi śaraṇāpattyādīnām
ekatareṇāpi puruṣārtha-siddher abhihitatvāt, tathāpi śrī-
nāradādi-vartmānusaradbhiḥ śrī-bhagavatā saha sambandha-
viśeṣaṁ dīkṣā-vidhānena śrī-guru-caraṇa-sampāditaṁ
cikīrṣadbhiḥ kṛtāyāṁ dīkṣāyām arcanam avaśyaṁ kriyetaiva

yadyapi svarūpato nāsti, tathāpi prāyaḥ svabhāvato dehādi-
sambandhena kadarya-śīlānāṁ vikṣipta-cittānāṁ janānāṁ tat-
tat-saṅkocī-karaṇāya
śrīmad-ṛṣi-prabhṛtibhir atrārcana-mārge kvacit kvacit kācit
kācin
maryādā sthāpitāsti.

It is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam's* opinion that the process of deity worship is not actually necessary, just as the specific prescriptions of the *Pañcarātra* and other scriptures do not have to be followed. The *Bhāgavatam* enjoins that even without practicing deity worship one can achieve the complete success of human life by any of the other devotional processes, such as simply offering oneself at the Lord's feet for protection. Nonetheless, Vaiṣṇavas, following the path of Śrī Nārada and his successors, endeavor to establish a personal relationship with the Lord by receiving the grace of a bona fide spiritual master through initiation, and in this tradition the devotees are obliged at the time of initiation to begin engaging in deity worship.

> Although deity worship is not essential, the material conditioning of most candidates for devotional service requires that they engage in this activity. When we consider their bodily and mental conditions, we find that the character of such candidates is impure and their minds are agitated. Therefore, to rectify this material conditioning, the great sage Nārada and others have at different times recommended various kinds of regulations for deity worship. (Quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 15.108 purport)

Simply by the tongue touching the *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, that holy name gives all kinds of perfection, including *kṛṣṇa-dāsya* and *rādhā-dāsya*. But one should note Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's very clear commentary to this verse and take it to heart for continual remembrance. In his *Bhakti-sandarbha* (283), he has written:

dvijānām anupetānāṁ svakarmādhyayanādiṣu
yathādhikāro nāstīha syāc copanayanād anu
tathātrādīkṣitānāṁ tu mantra-devārcanādiṣu
nādhikāro 'sty ataḥ kuryād ātmānaṁ śiva-saṁstutam

> Even though born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, one cannot engage in Vedic rituals without being initiated and having a sacred thread. Although born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, one becomes a *brāhmaṇa* only after initiation and the sacred thread ceremony. Unless one is initiated as a *brāhmaṇa*, one cannot worship the holy name properly. (Quoted in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 15.108)[6]

It is true that simply by touching the tongue *kṛṣṇa-nāma* can give everything. But the material tongue, the tongue of a conditioned soul, cannot touch the transcendental holy name.

[6] The following statement of Śrīla Prabhupāda in Paris, 1973, as quoted from the paper mentioned by Śrīpāda Padmanābha Mahārāja at the beginning of this chapter, refers to the above-mentioned verse of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. "Chanting the Hare-Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Then, as he practices, he becomes more purified. Then second initiation – *gāyatrī-mantra*. The first initiation, according to Jīva Gosvāmī, that is sufficient. Chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, that is sufficient. But still, to purify them more, the second initiation, *gāyatrī*, is given."

ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau
svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ
(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.234)

With the material senses one cannot understand the transcendental holy name of the Lord or His form, activities and pastimes. But when one actually engages in devotional service, utilizing the tongue, the Lord is revealed.

Śrī Nārada Muni and other previous *ācāryas*, like Brahmā, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanat-kumāra, have all taken *dīkṣā*. One receives *dīkṣā*, then performs *sādhana-bhajana*, and worships his *iṣṭadeva* (personal deity), Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has written that without *dīkṣā* there will be no relationship with Kṛṣṇa – neither *dāsya, sākhya, vātsalya,* nor *mādhurya*. It will never be possible without *dīkṣā*. In our *sampradāya, sambandha-jñāna* comes only by uttering "*gopījana-vallabhāya*" in the *gopāla-mantra*; otherwise it cannot come.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has written an explanation of this same verse. Therein he vividly explains that one may have given up all kinds of *sādhana* and pious activities and may be chanting and remembering the holy names of Bhagavān – he may have determined that his *iṣṭa-deva* is Kṛṣṇa – still, if he has not taken initiation from a Vaiṣṇava *guru*, thinking that it is not essential, he can never achieve Kṛṣṇa. The only good result he achieves is that he will not go to hell. He cannot achieve the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, in any life, until he is properly initiated. In a future life, by the fruit of his previous activities of *bhajana*, he will take birth in a very religious family and there he will have *sādhu-saṅga*, *guru-pādāśraya*, and then *dīkṣā*. At that time, he will make solid advancement in *bhakti*. This is the only way.

Also, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has written in the first verse of his *Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā*:

gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭālayiṣu sujane bhūsura-gaṇe
sva-mantre śrī-nāmni vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇe
sadā dambhaṁ hitvā kuru ratim apūrvām atitarā-
maye svāntar bhrātaś caṭubhir abhiyāce dhṛta-padaḥ

O my dear brother; my foolish mind! Taking hold of your feet, I humbly pray to you with sweet words. Please give up all pride and quickly develop sublime and incessant *rati* for *śrī gurudeva*, Śrī Vraja-dhāma, the residents of Vraja, the Vaiṣṇavas, the *brāhmaṇas*, my *dīkṣā-mantras*, the holy names of the Supreme Lord, and the shelter of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the eternally youthful divine couple of Vraja.

Why has he said "*mantra*" if *dīkṣā* initiation is not necessary? Why has he not said only "*śrī nāmni*"? What is *sva-mantra*? There is some difference between *mantra* and *harināma*, and that is why he has told his mind: "You should give up your false pride and try to develop sublime and unprecedented attachment for both. Take shelter of *nāma* and *mantra*, and then your life will be successful." So there are two things – not one. His *gurudeva* gave him *mantra* – and that is *dīkṣā*.

Now kindly reconcile all these points.

Gaura-premānande!